



Staff Report

File #: 22-392
Version: 1

Date: 8/22/2022
Item #: 3.3f.

TO: Mayor and City Council
THROUGH: Kristin Retherford, Interim City Manager
FROM: Gretchen Bennett, Homelessness Liaison

SUBJECT:

City service and investment in response to the homelessness emergency

Ward(s): All Wards
Councilor(s): All Councilors
Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods
Result Area(s): Safe Community; Welcoming and Livable Community.

SUMMARY:

Council directed \$750,000 in State of Oregon sheltering grant funds to be used to establish and operate a safe park program on Front Street SE to serve people who are experiencing homelessness. Upon further analysis, start-up costs for the site are proving to be much more costly than anticipated. Council is asked to redirect dollars toward the Turner Road SE location, to serve people experiencing homelessness through a micro-shelter village program.

ISSUE:

Shall City Council reallocate \$750,000 previously earmarked for the Front Street Safe Park site to support a Turner Road SE micro-shelter village?

RECOMMENDATION:

Council shall reallocate \$750,000 previously earmarked for the Front Street Safe Park site to a Turner Road SE micro-shelter village

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

Staff find the Front Street location is no longer cost-efficient. Start-up expenses will exceed original

projections, leaving less for operations. For example, environmentally friendly sanitation services for up to 40 recreational vehicles requires a high level of up-front investment. The lease for the property ends in December 2023. Due to these greater than anticipated costs, investing in the extensive work needed to prepare the site is not recommended.

The Turner Road location was approved by City Council for micro-sheltering on January 24, 2022. The Church at the Park nonprofit organization owns the property, which expands the ability to operate services long-term and maximizes start-up funds. Operating a micro-shelter village at Turner Road would add this service to South Salem and would end drop-in day services at the location, meeting neighborhood desire for stability and the City's priority of expanding service locations across the City.

Church @ the Park has \$290,000 leveraged in foundation grants and community donations for the site preparation at the Turner Road location, lowering the request to the City for start-up expenses. An additional \$225,997 in annual operating dollars is also leveraged for this location, reducing the request to the City for operational dollars.

The Turner Road micro-shelter village would provide up to forty shelter beds focusing on 18-24 years old who are experiencing homelessness.

BACKGROUND:

The City Council 2022 Strategic Priorities includes responding to Salem's sheltering crisis. Micro-shelter villages and safe park services are one method for providing safe alternatives to park or street living and assist people with stabilization and progress toward their next positive destination.

The City has received a one-time \$10,500,000 allocation for sheltering within our community appropriated from the 2021 Legislature and is also administering \$8,055,390 one-time ARPA dollars for the purposes of managing and responding to issues facing our community with our regional unsheltered emergency.

Gretchen Bennett
Homelessness Liaison

Attachments:
None.